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THE RAGTIMER

MARCH/APRIL 1977

PUBLISHED BY
THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSICAL RAGTIME

SOCIETY OFFERING OF ITEMS FOR SALE TO MEMBERS

COMMERCIALLY PUBLISHED SHEET MUSIC
(These are available at $1. 50 each postpaid.)

CM-645	Apple Jack (C. L. Johnson) 1909
CM-614	Black & White Rag (Botsford) 1908
CM-641	Blaze Away (Abe Holzmann) 1901
CM-610	Centennial Rag (John Arpin) 1966
CM-644	Crab Apple Rag (Wenrich) 1908
CM-621	Everybody's Rag (Goldsmith-Sharp) 1909
CM-629	Fig Leaf Rag (Joplin) 1908
CM-622	Good Gravy Rag (Belding) 1913
CM-627	Graceful Ghost Rag (Wm. Bolcom) 1971
CM-631	Happy Rag (Grady) 1913
CM-623	Hot Chocolate Rag (Lange-Franklin) 1908
CM-626	Missouri Rag, The (Fitzgerald) 1900
CM-632	Old Swanee Rag (Grady) 1913
CM-609	Opera House Rag (Darch-Lamb)
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CM-618	Pickles & Peppers (Shepherd) 1906
CM-633	Pigeon Wing Rag (C. L. Johnson) 1909
CM-612	Porcupine Rag (C. L. Johnson) 1909
CM-613	Powder Rag ("Birch" - C. L. Johnson) 1908
CM-630	Rose Leaf Rag (Joplin) 1909
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CM-617	Tickled to Death (Hunter) 1901
CM-616	Twelfth Street Rag (Euday Bowman) 1914
CM-643	Whistling Rufus (Kerry Mills) 1899

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SHEET MUSIC - COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

Early large-size original printings of Colorful Sheet Music (limited supply). All copies are in fresh condition and suitable for framing.

CM-638	Louisiana Rag (Block) 1911.....	$2. 50 postpaid
CM-639	Turkish Trophies Rag (Sara B. Egan) 1907.....	$2. 50 postpaid
CM-640	Wedding Bells Rag (Coney) 1910.....	$2. 50 postpaid

(Listing is continued on page 21 of this issue of THE RAGTIMER)

RAGTIME . . .
UNDER YOUR HAT

FOUNDED 1962
INCORPORATED 1970

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
INCORPORATED

is a non - profit corporation having the following objects:

To preserve classical ragtime music and to pursue such other activities as shall serve to maintain and develop interest in classical ragtime music and music related thereto.

ARE YOU PLANNING
TO COME?

13th Annual Bash
THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
The Weekend Of
Sat. Oct. 15, 1977

AT
TORONTO

(Details will appear in a later issue of THE RAGTIMER)

URGENT
FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

We have not moved, but our postal address has been amended. Here is the new address:

The Ragtime Society Inc.,
P. O. Box 520, Station A,
Weston, Ontario, Canada,
M9N 3N3

The amendment is the addition of "Station A" following our box number. The reason provided by the post office authorities is that a second station has been added to serve the Weston area of Metropolitan Toronto. The new station also has a box numbered 520. Please correct your records for future use when writing to the SOCIETY. Until our present supply of envelopes and letterheads has been used up, the designation "Station A" will have to be added by hand when considered necessary.

Renewals and new memberships in the SOCIETY have been coming in at a good rate for 1977, but we still need more. Every year your relatives and friends are often being remembered on birthdays and special occasions and again at Christmas time by the giving of gifts. Sometimes you are searching for gift ideas. WHY NOT PRESENT SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT WITH A MEMBERSHIP IN THE RAGTIME SOCIETY!

Even though we become repetitious at times, we continue to express grateful thanks to the many

(continued on page 4)

THE RAGTIMER is the official publication of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY Inc., P. O. Box 520, Stn. A, Weston, Ontario, Canada M9N 3N3. All rights of THE RAGTIMER are reserved to the Corporation. Membership is $8.00 per year and includes all issues of THE RAGTIMER published during the current year.

loyal and supportive members who have done, or are doing, more than their share in helping to secure the financial stability for the continuation of our activities.

The preservation and promotion of Ragtime must be regarded as an interest-in-common for all members. When members are involved in, or come across, events or stories about ragtime which can be of general interest to all ragtimers they are urged to report on or send a copy of such material to THE RAGTIMER for possible publication, and certainly for the SOCIETY records.

EUBIE and MARION BLAKE recently spent another of their regular vacations in California. Again it was a delight to witness a vigorous and vibrant Eubie at 94 play ragtime and exchange banter with Johnny Carson on TV, while out at the west coast.

Canadian members will be looking forward to a viewing of the CBC first-run TV Musicamera Show on Wednesday March 23, 1977 at 9:00 p.m. E.S.T., of a documentary tracing the history of ragtime from the 1890s to the present, titled (as you could expect) "They All Play Ragtime." Performers are to include the TURK MURPHY JAZZ BAND, JOE (FINGERS) CARR, MAX MORATH, ST. LOUIS RAGTIMERS, and EUBIE BLAKE who recalls the early days of ragtime. Films were made in New Orleans, St. Louis, San Francisco and New York. This will be a one hour program.

Director BILL McCROSTIE of our SOCIETY reports that he will be in Cleveland, Ohio on Sunday, March 27, 1977 in connection with a special concert sponsored by PAUL and MARILYN SURAN, proprietors of SHELDON INN, presenting SI. RICHARDS (see Something Doing) at the piano. Si will be playing a salute to the music of Harry Warren, Fats Waller, Teddy Wilson, Art Tatum and the late Errol Garner.

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by
TEX
WYNDHAM

Musical Wonder House Album No. 1103 'Ragtime and Cakewalks Played By Antique Musical Boxes'.

Selections: Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home?*; I Guess I'll Have To Telegraph My Baby*; Smokey Mokes; At A Darktown Cakewalk; Lucinda's Jubilee; Mr. Johnson, Turn Me Loose; At A Georgia Camp Meeting*; Rag Knots; Tickled To Death*; Mississippi Rag; Tangle Foot Rag; Ragging The Scale; A Warm Reception; Peaceful Henry; Noodles; Eli Green's Cakewalk; Any Rags*; My Hannah Lady; I Want You My Honey; Dora Dean; Shine On Johnson; The Smiler; A Rich Coon's Babe; Alagazam

Cakewalk; The Entertainer; The Winner; Whistling Rufus*; There'll Be A Hot Time In The Old Town Tonight.

*Two versions (three on 'Georgia Camp')

Available at $7.45 postpaid (add 5% for Maine residents and 30¢ for optional insurance) from The Musical Wonder House, 18 High Street, Wiscasset, Maine 04578.

The title of this Lp fully describes it, and a better, more definitive disc on the subject would be hard to imagine. Overall, a charming record, containing the only available versions, to my knowledge, of some of these forgotten rags and coon songs ('Shine On Johnson' sounds like a real dandy number), although the extreme brevity of the individual tracks makes the album a bit hard to settle down and listen to. Still, both verse and chorus of the songs are usually played - sometimes the full score to the rags (but without repeats) - and one has to marvel at the surprisingly intricate arrangements tinkled out by some of these little machines. The liner notes could be more fully descriptive of the boxes used, but why quibble when you have in hand just the gift for a confirmed ragtimer who thinks he already has everything?

* * *

The Smithsonian Collection N 003 'Piano Music Of Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton', piano solos by James Dapogny.

Selections: The Pearls, New Orleans Blues, Big Foot Ham, Kansas City Stomp, Jelly Roll Blues, Frog-I-More Rag, Stratford Hunch, Hyena Stomp, Frances, Jungle Blues, The Crave, Black Bottom Stomp.

Available from The Smithsonian Collection, P.O. Box 5734, Terre Haute, Indiana 47802.

Dapogny, a clean, impressive player with a big, two-fisted sound, here delivers a creditable pastiche of Morton's style, culled from sheet music, Jelly's records and typical Morton licks. The clear-cut successes are, happily, among the least-known of the dozen Morton-composed masterpieces comprising the program: 'Hyena' - carefully developed, swinging riff tune, moving with logic and zest from simple exposition to swirling improvisation; 'Jungle' - gripping in intensity, spellbinding as a tom-tom; 'Frances' - echoes of Harlem nicely fused with Mortonish funk; 'Crave' - lovely, yearning melody sailing over Latin rhythm. On the faster titles, Dapogny sometimes gets a little heavy on the left hand and tends toward mechanical overworking of certain ideas, thereby losing a measure of vitality. However, Dapogny never strikes out, and he does hit some homers, so score this one as no worse than pretty good.

* * *

The Smithsonian Collection N 001 'Classic Rags And Ragtime Songs', conducted by T. J. Anderson

Selections: Quality, Castle House Rag, Ragtime Oriole, A Real Slow Drag, Kinklets, Pine Apple Rag, Grace And Beauty, Junk Man Rag, Fizz Water.

Personnel: Emerson Head, cornet; Norman Katz, clarinet; Calvin Jones, trombone; Martin Piecuch, flute; Joel Berman, Jane Flowers, violins; Barbara Winslow, viola;

Virginia Gardner, cello; John Malachi, piano; Paul Milde, string bass; Kenneth Krohn, drums.

For 'Castle', 'Junk' and 'Fizz', add George Horan, cornet.

For 'Drag', Piecuch switches to bassoon, and add Helmut Braunlich, Edward Drennen, Sheryl Krohn, Judith Parkinson, Dolores Robbins, violins; Betty Haines, viola; Charles Almeida, flute; Edward Walters, oboe; Carolyn Parks Tate, french horn; and Rhonda Kersey, tuba. Vocal by April Curtis and Margaret Lindsay, sopranos, with members of the Morgan State University Chorus under the direction of Nathan Carter.

'Pine Apple' is sung by David Hudson, tenor, with members of the Chorus as above, accompanied by Annette Houston, piano.

Available from The Smithsonian Collection, P. O. Box 5734, Terre Haute, Indiana 47802.

Seven of the nine tracks are readings of vintage ragtime-era stock arrangements of classic rags in the correct and elegant style perhaps most familiarly associated with the New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble. Generally utilizing string or woodwind lead, and with relatively little in the way of countermelodies or distinctive scoring apart from what appears in the piano versions, the sound is inherently restrained and, at the labored tempos chosen for 'Castle' and 'Junk', can be ponderous and defanged. The vocal numbers don't help much, with one of the sopranos having a somewhat thin timbre and uneven pitch, and the tenor struggling to get the lyric out at the hopelessly fast clip laid down for him. 'Oriole' is nicely voiced, 'Kinklets' and 'Fizz' have a solid bite, other renditions are sporadically foot-tappers, and historians will relish a chance to hear previously unrecorded period ragtime charts, but I wind up without much enthusiasm for this one.

* * *

Advent 5021 'Something Like A Rag', piano solos by Brian Dykstra

Selections: Heliotrope Bouquet, Solace, Gladiolus Rag, Pensive, Top Liner, Bohemia, Salt Creek Township Rag, The World's Greatest Grin, The Philosopher, Sometimes A Waltz, The Raggedy Blue Romp.

Available from Brian Dykstra, College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio 44691 or Advent Records, 4150 Mayfield Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44121.

Brian brings his considerable technique and musical knowledge effectively to bear on the five classic rags in this collection, moving from initially literal readings to variations (on repeats) sensitively and successfully. 'Heliotrope' glides with momentum and grace; 'Solace' brings out all the loveliness in Joplin's melody; 'Gladiolus' builds to a stirring trio and rideout; and the two Lamb rags are also generally satisfying. I can relate to the ragtime influences in the six Dykstra compositions that fill out the program, but not to the (to me) modern and unfamiliar sounds that make up the majority of these relatively longer numbers. This sharp division in style suggests that Brian's album will be best received by those whose inclinations step noticeably beyond the type of music usually discussed in this column.

* * *

Black Lion BL-301 'Piano Ragtime', piano solos by Duncan Swift

Selections: Grandpa's Spells, The Crave, Frog-I-More Rag, The Pearls, Shreveport Stomp, The Naked Dance, Maple Leaf Rag, Heliotrope Bouquet, Original Rags, The Entertainer, Climax Rag, Carolina Shout.

Available from Audiofidelity Enterprises, Inc., 221 West 57th Street, New York, New York 10019.

In what is probably a vain effort to justify the time I wasted reviewing this abomination, I have consoled myself with the thought that we might not appreciate the good records as much if we didn't, just occasionally, hear a thoroughly repulsive one. Swift would be quite a good ragtimer, judging from his technique, if he weren't such a showoff, but he insists on taking every number at a speed just a little too fast for his ability, in filling every space with as many notes as possible, and in generally displaying the worst of taste at every opportunity. Too bad that Black Lion didn't have a fire in its vaults between this album's August 1969 recording in London and the more recent date of its being loosed on a defenseless world. You may like this disc, but if you do, take my advice and don't broadcast the fact.

* * *

Music For Pleasure MFP 50194 'Back To Boogie', piano solos by Neville Dickie with rhythm accompaniment

Selections: The Original Pine Top's Boogie Woogie, How Long Blues, St. Louis Blues, Bad Penny Blues, Honky Tonk Train Blues, Honky Tonk, Back To Boogie, Boogie Woogie Blues, Barrel House Blues, Swanee River Boogie, Hamp's Boogie Woogie, Roll 'Em Pete.

Personnel: Neville Dickie, piano; Brian Daly, guitar; Arthur Watts, bass; Ronnie Verrell, drums.

This British Lp finds one of England's foremost ragtime pianists rolling out bright, clean, propulsive 8-to-the-bar, supported by a driving, well-knit, back-roomy rhythm team. The program provides an excellent boogie sampler for those unused to the style, as it includes famous masterpieces like 'Pine' and 'Train', steaming boogie adaptations of familiar melodies like 'River', and a rag-flavored Dickie original in 'Back', along with a number of tunes in the typical 3-chord twelve-bar boogie format. It's all well played, in a cheerful and inviting mood, each track making a brief to-the-point statement and winding up before boogie's potential for monotony creeps in. Despite a surface simplicity, this is technically demanding music, requiring dexterity and stamina as well as taste (all of which Neville has in abundance), perhaps explaining why very few of the large crop of young traditionally-oriented ticklers include boogie in their repertoires. A welcome album.

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A generation of doubting souls at the turn of the century regarded ragtime as an indecent sound, and used the popular phrase of the times in reaction, "The devil makes the foot pat."

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MAPLE LEAF RAG by SCOTT JOPLIN

(Ed. Comment: Maple Leaf Rag, after a published existence of some 77 years, still continues to be the number one and best known standard rag of the classic ragtime era. It is likely to remain so long after The Entertainer, also composed by Joplin, has fallen away in popularity. As a matter of record we are reprinting the content of the original contract made between music publisher John Stark and Son and the composer of Maple Leaf Rag, Scott Joplin on August 10, 1899.)

" ***** Article of Agreement *****

This agreement entered into this 10th day of August in the year of our Lord 1899 by and between John Stark and Son party of the first part and Scott Joplin party of the second part both of the City of Sedalia and County of Pettis and State of Missouri.

Witnesseth: That whereas Scott Joplin has composed a certain piece of music entitled Maple Leaf Rag and has not funds sufficient to publish same it is hereby agreed with above parties of the first part that John Stark and Son shall publish said piece of music and shall pay for all plates and for copy right and printing and whatever may be necessary to publish said piece of music.

It is further agreed by and between the parties hereto that John Stark and Son shall have the exclusive right to said piece of music to publish and sell and handle the same as they may seem fit and proper to their interest.

It is further agreed by and between the parties hereto that Scott Joplin's name shall appear in print on each and every piece of music as composer and John Stark and Son as publishers.

It is further agreed by and between the parties hereto that Scott Joplin shall have free of charge ten copies of said piece of music as soon as published.

It is further agreed by and between said parties that Scott Joplin the composer of said music shall have and receive a royalty of one cent per copy on each copy of said piece of music sold by said Stark and Son.

It is further agreed by and between said parties that the said Scott Joplin shall be allowed to purchase and the said Stark and Son agrees to sell to the said Joplin all the copies of said music he may want at the price of Five cents per copy. Said copies shall not be sold for less than Twenty-five cents per copy by said Joplin. It is further agreed that John Stark & Son will not retail for less than Twenty-five cents per copy.

Witness our hands and seals the day and year first above written."

(Signed) - John Stark & Son

(Signed) - Scott Joplin

Signed in presence of
(Signed) R. A. Hepdon

****

LOTTIE (STOKES) JOPLIN
WIDOW OF RAGTIME COMPOSER SCOTT JOPLIN

By Solomon Goodman

There has been a tremendous revival and interest in ragtime music in the past few years, especially the music of Scott Joplin, composer of the famous "Maple Leaf Rag" and the opera "Treemonisha".

However, no one, to my knowledge, knew what became of Lottie Joplin, widow of the composer, or when or where she died and where she is buried.

Now, through information supplied by fellow music collector, friend and ragtime authority Dave Jasen, plus the courtesy of the New York City Department of Health in doing further searching, a photostat copy of the Certificate of Death of Lottie Joplin has been obtained.

The following information, as copied from the certificate, is given.

LOTTIE JOPLIN - AKA LOTTIE THOMAS
Washington, D. C., Sept. 3, 1873. New York, N. Y. March 14, 1953.
Age 79.
Place of death - Harlem Hospital, New York, N. Y.
Name of father - John D. Stokes
Maiden name of mother - Mary D. Fox
Name of cemetary - Frederick Douglas Memorial Park, Staten Island, N. Y.

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GOOD RAG TIMES

(Ed. Comment: The following excerpts were drawn from an article by FRANK ROSE in the Zoo World Magazine which was later adapted by the Chicago Sunday Sun-times and forwarded to us by SOCIETY member JOHN STEINER of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U. S. A. Here is yet another setting down of an account of the early years of ragtime.)

"Ragtime, which was all the rage for 20 years and scoffed at ever since, is at last getting the acceptance it deserves.

The roots of ragtime lie buried in the muddy past of American folk music - not the pseudo folk we listen to today, with its million-selling albums and TV specials and carefully packaged appeal, but real folk music, music which was passed along for generations without even being written down. By the time the ragtime craze was over, you could almost say there was no more folk music (in the strict sense of the term). Ragtime, whose lifespan bridged the transition from folk to pop, became the first form of pop.

The rise of ragtime, was in large measure, technologically determined. Ragtime

was written for the piano, and in the 1890's, when the ragtime fad began, inexpensive upright pianos were available for the first time. They became as common as home stereo systems are today. This created a new market for sheet music, which in turn led to the development of the music business - sheet music publishers in New York and elsewhere whose product was sold to eager buyers all over the country who rushed home to play the latest hits on their pianos.

But why ragtime? The technological developments were coincidental, but ragtime's appeal was genuine. The new music was perfect for a nation still recovering from economic depression and weary of riots and threats of revolution. With its light-hearted gaiety, ragtime encouraged people to turn their backs on their problems and get down to the real business of having fun.

What made ragtime so fresh was its beat. Musically, the distinguishing factor in ragtime is its use of compound syncopation, accenting the weak, normally unaccented second and third beats of the measure against a regularly accented bass to provide complex polyrhythms. Although extended syncopation is rare in Western music, its driving momentum has always been common in African and Afro-American music - and ragtime was the creation and for most part the property of American blacks.

The beginnings of ragtime could be found in the 1830's and '40's, in the slave cabins and fields on the Mississippi River Valley plantations and in the fierce dances of the New Orleans slaves. The plantation banjos and the rippling drumbeats found their showbiz counterpart in traveling minstrel shows performed by blacks or by whites in blackface.

If the minstrels were instrumental in getting white audiences to accept black music, it was the itinerant black "piano professors" in the tenderloin districts of the Mississippi Valley towns who actually developed what came to be known as ragtime. Throughout the Midwest, in New Orleans, Little Rock, Nashville, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Chicago and dozens of smaller towns, red-light districts flourished with frontier abandon.

Hustlers, black and white, mingled in the pool halls and bordellos and saloons in a manner that wasn't done in the more respectable sections of town. The easy money floating around was more than enough to support the entertainers who lived and worked in this honky-tonk atmosphere, which attracted black musicians because there was no place else for them to play.

It was a large but apparently inevitable step for ragtime from the parlors of the husky Midwest madams to the parlors of middle-class homes across the country. In 1897, ragtime made its commercial debut with "Mississippi Rag," the first instrumental piece to be published completely in ragtime.

It wasn't until 1897, in fact, that arrangers had developed a method of scoring syncopation, but from that year on the ragtime craze built until by 1900 it was sweeping the country. And although William Krell, who wrote "Mississippi Rag" was white, the publication later that year of Tom Turpin's "Harlem Rag" ensured that blacks would get the credit they deserved. Two years later Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag" was published, eventually to become the nation's first million-seller - in sheet music sales.

Excitement was building in St. Louis because of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904, a bourgeois extravaganza whose closest contact with ragtime turned out to be the cakewalk syncopations of John Philip Sousa's 64-man brass band. True ragtime remained in the district, hardly a likely terrain for the respectable tourist.

Despite the fair's reluctance to admit it, ragtime had already taken over the country. The credit for introducing it to "polite society" goes to Ben Harney, a young white entertainer who billed himself as "the inventor of ragtime" on the vaudeville circuit. The credit for vulgarizing it goes to Mike Bernard, a flashy New Yorker who won the title of "Ragtime King of the World" in a contest sponsored by the publisher of the Police Gazette in 1900. Blacks were not considered.

Although the ragtime enthusiasts had little trouble introducing the new music to the public, they did have problems with the guardians of Victorian culture. Ragtime, because of its origin and because of its intense rhythmic qualities, was often considered disreputable.

In the 1900's ragtime was rapidly commercialized by the Tin Pan Alley tunesmiths, who knew a fast buck when they saw one. The music business was becoming concentrated in New York, where the doors did not open to the blacks who had originated ragtime but to whites who churned out watered-down versions of it for popular consumption. Although the Alleymen occasionally came up with some good rags, such as Irving Berlin's catchy "Alexander's Ragtime Band," for the most part they were content to grind out second-rate stuff. Moreover, as the whites developed their own style of playing, a sort of pseudo ragtime emerged, brittle, cliched, and lacking the style and grace of the black music.

By 1917, when Joplin died, the ragtime era was over. The other ragtime greats, men like Eubie Blake and Jelly Roll Morton and Tom Turpin and Joe Lamb, all died or retired or moved on to other things. The new music was jazz, and soon ragtime came to be regarded as quaint and old-fashioned and a little ridiculous. Now, 75 years after "Maple Leaf Rag" first appeared, people are becoming interested again."

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THE PHONOGRAPH
1977 MARKS 100 YEARS OF PROGRESS

(Ed. Comment: At the turn of the century and down through the years which followed, the phonograph played an important role in the preservation of ragtime. The articles brought together in THE RAGTIMER, are to be reprinted for their historical significance. The opening article is from THE TORONTO STAR Feb. 26, 1977, and was written by Star Staff Writer WILLIAM LITTLER under the headline THE PHONOGRAPH'S 100.)

"You've heard the stories of Archimedes in his bathtub and Newton's encounter with an apple, of course. But did you know that 1977 happens to be the 100th anniversary of the occasion when Thomas Alva Edison pricked his finger?

It happened in his Menlo Park, New Jersey, laboratory and along with some blood, out came what we now call, thanks to his naming it, the phonograph. Here is how Edison told the story:

"I was singing to the mouthpiece of a telephone, when the vibrations of the wire sent the fine steel point into my finger. That set me to thinking. If I could record the actions of the point, and then send the point over the same surface afterwards, I saw no reason why the thing would not talk.

"I tried the experiment, first on a strip of telegraph paper, and found that the point made an alphabet. I shouted the word 'Halloo! Halloo!' into the mouthpiece, ran the paper back over the steel point, and heard a faint 'Halloo! Halloo!' in return. I determined to make a machine that would work accurately, and gave my assistants instructions, telling them what I had discovered.

"They laughed at me. I bet 15 cigars with one of my assistants, Mr. Adams, that the thing would work the first time without a break, and won them. That's the whole story. The discovery came through the pricking of a finger."

That isn't quite the whole story - the discovery was made by others, at least on a theoretical basis, before the inventor of the incandescent light bulb shed blood over it. But Edison constructed the first working model of a talking machine and thereby became the father of an industry that today accounts for $250 million in retail sales and employs 10, 000 people in Canada alone.

Edison didn't himself follow up all the implications of his invention. The Menlo Park laboratory had other projects on the burner. But he did, with amazing foresight, anticipate its future ramifications.

For one thing, he predicted its use in replacing shorthand stenographers. He saw it as a learning tool for the blind, a means of collecting and teaching languages, a way of making toys talk, of composing music, of hearing an opera in one's own living room.

Every one of his predictions came true, though one or two awaited the invention of magnetic tape to make their full impact felt. The social implications of the Edison phonograph have been enormous.

It isn't often realized how much of the history of the past hundred years Edison and his successors have preserved for posterity. From the beginning they invited the great names of science and politics, literature and the arts to step into hastily improvised studios, to project their voices into megaphones while a stylus cut grooves into a wax cylinder.

Thanks to their tenacity, it is possible to hear the voices of Florence Nightingale and P. T. Barnum, Theodore Roosevelt and Vladimir Illyich Lenin. One cylinder even recorded Cpl. Kenneth Landfrey sounding the bugle call he blew on Oct. 25, 1854 to set in motion the Charge of the Light Brigade.

It didn't take long for Edison's invention to reach Canada. One of the major high-

lights of the Toronto Industrial Exhibition of 1888 was Edison's Improved Phonograph.

Governor-General Lord Stanley opened that exhibition and was prevailed upon to use the occasion to record a message to the president and people of the United States. According to Edward B. Moogk, in his authoritative history of Canadian recordings, Roll Back The Years, that message now constitutes the world's oldest-surviving recorded sound.

For a time Canada was a world leader in recording, thanks to the presence of Emile Berliner, a German-born entrepreneur with international connections, who obtained Canadian Talking Machine Patents in 1897 and set up shop in Montreal two years later.

Berliner, Columbia and Edison were the big names at the turn of the century and they were soon joined by others. Berliner led the move from cylinders to discs, from the phonograph to the gramophone, and recording technology improved.

The wind-up boxes with their metal horns started challenging the piano for pride of place in the front parlors of the land.

As we all know, the wind-up boxes won, or rather, their more sophisticated descendents won. And in the process, what we hear and the way we hear changed dramatically. Not only do we have access to the voices of history, we can have every conceivable kind of music at our fingertips without knowing how to play so much as a note.

Recording technology has in turn changed music itself, fathered a different kind of performer, altered what Canadian composer Murray Schafer calls the very soundscape.

On the negative side, it has helped make us a society of listeners rather than participants. But it has also made us better informed. It has even toppled governments (remember the Watergate tapes ?).

Conscious of the tremendous impact Edison's invention has had on our lives, the Canadian Recording Industry Association has devised an ingenious way of celebrating the centennial of recorded sound.

The centennial is being celebrated in other parts of the world as well - France and India are issuing commemorative postage stamps, Holland is distributing records to school children, England will see a six-part television series on the record business.

But, according to Arnold Gosewich of Capital Records, none of these celebrations matches the proportions of the Canadian Recording Industry Pavilion scheduled to open at the Canadian National Exhibition this summer.

The pavilion, which involves re-designing the present Automotive Building, is to house historical material, industry displays, live as well as recorded music. It promises to be a monument to Edison's pinprick.

It will be a considerable challenge, though, for the pavilion to keep pace with the

development of sound recording. Computer technology is already with us, along with video discs, and the day of direct broadcast transmission by satellites is dawning. The art and the industry have come a long way since the sage of Menlo Park committed his own voice to posterity, reciting the verses of Mary Had A Little Lamb."

* * *

(Ed. Comment: The second article introduces the involvement of RCA Victor in the development of phonographic entertainment. The following is an excerpt from liner notes written by PAUL ACKERMAN, music editor of BILLBOARD for RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA in 1959 which appeared with the RCA Victor record album LM6074 called 60 YEARS of "Music America Loves Best.")

"The history-making performances in these grooves comprise a distinctive recorded document - a mirror of American musical life dating back to the beginning of the century. This collection is unique in another respect, for it represents a historical survey of RCA Victor and the development of recorded sound from the period of the acoustical process to the era of high fidelity. Glamour, high financial adventure and derring-do are elements in the story. But even more significant is the fact that the basic planning of the company stemmed from the marriage of art and science. The excellence of the ultimate product derives from the most fertile of unions.

General David Sarnoff, Chairman of the Board, Radio Corporation of America, touched upon this theme - the union of art and science - on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Victor Records. He stated: "Science has a natural affinity with music. The phonograph is a perfect illustration of the strong relationship that exists between the arts and science. Music is a wonderland of the arts in which scientists find new challenges for invention..."

This is as true today as it was during the latter part of the nineteenth century, when several determined pioneers became fascinated with the idea of reproducing the human voice on a "talking machine." The machine became a reality in 1877 when Thomas A. Edison and his laboratory assistants built the first tin-foil cylinder phonograph. Later, spurred by the rivalry of Dr. Alexander Bell, his brother Chichester, and Charles Sumner Tainter, who had developed a wax cylinder, Edison improved his product. He too constructed a wax cylinder and a machine for reproducing the sound recorded on the cylinder. Listeners used ear tubes to hear these early cylinders, for the volume was quite low. The reproducing equipment resembled a dictating machine.

A new development destined to supersede the cylinder phonograph was the "gramophone." This reproduced sound on flat discs which were lateral-cut, in contrast to the vertical-cut cylinders. The inventor, Emile Berliner, a German-born telephone expert, applied for his patent in 1887 - ten years after Edison's tinfoil phonograph and one year later than the apparatus developed by Bell and Tainter. Berliner's system provided a master record from which duplicates could be obtained - in itself a great advance.

Seeking to improve his device, Berliner took his manually operated machine to Eldridge Johnson, a Camden, New Jersey, mechanic and model-maker. Johnson designed a spring motor to replace the handwound mechanism, and was granted a contract

to produce 200 such motors for the recently formed Berliner Gramophone Company.

The meeting between Berliner and Johnson was a fateful one - for Johnson continuously improved Berliner's machine, ultimately salvaged the company and reorganized it into the Victor Talking Machine Company. Johnson followed up his spring motor design with many others; a governor to insure constant turntable speed; an improved sound box; an improved record using shellac instead of hard rubber.

In 1898 an American, William Barry Owen, armed with the permission to negotiate the European sale of Berliner's patent rights, gathered a group of British inventors and formed the Gramophone Company, in London. Owen had turned the trick by demonstrating Johnson's improved Gramophone, and to Johnson went the contract for the manufacture of the machines.

In the United States, meanwhile, Berliner's company became enmeshed in litigation. Powerful enemies questioned the validity of the Berliner patents and Johnson's right to manufacture and sell the machines. On March 1, 1901, Johnson himself went before the Philadelphia courts to plead the case. Roland Gelatt, author of The Fabulous Phonograph, states: "His (Johnson's) enterprise was at stake, and he presented his case in his deliberate Yankee drawl with profound conviction . . . The injunction halting manufacture was refused."

Johnson reorganized the company, acquiring the Berliner patents to supplement his own. Gelatt, again in The Fabulous Phonograph, adds: "He (Johnson) decided to use a name all his and he chose Victor - Victor Talking Machines and Victor Records. It was euphonious and evocative of success . . . the talking machine in America had come of age."

Approximately one year later, the great tenor Enrico Caruso was recorded in Milan, Italy, using the Victor master-disc method. Other operatic stars followed Caruso into the recording field, and in 1904 - just two months after the tenor's Metropolitan Opera debut - Caruso became an exclusive Victor artist. The Red Seal era was now under way - an epoch which through the years has raised the record industry to a new cultural level.

1906 marked another milestone in Victor's history - the birth of the phonograph bearing the "Victrola" trademark in a cabinet which harmonized with well-designed furniture. The old-fashioned phonograph horn had disappeared into the cabinet; the result was improved appearance and sound.

In the years that followed, recording techniques and instruments continued to advance and the Victor Talking Machine Company burgeoned. 1922 was a peak year, with record sales reaching $100,000,000. The advent of radio, however, had a severe effect on the record business, and for the next ten years record sales declined as radio grew. Nonetheless, it was during this time that the separate paths of phonograph recording and electronics began to merge. In 1925 the merger became a fact: the microphone replaced the horn, and frequencies never before recorded were put on wax.

In 1929 General Sarnoff initiated negotiations whereby the Radio Corporation of America acquired the Victor Talking Machine Company. Years later Sarnoff stated:

"Radio electronized the phonograph and greatly revived its popularity and the business. Although the Victor Talking Machine Company passed into radio hands, more phonographs are made and sold today than ever before. And the phonograph, through its magic association with electronics, has kept pace with progress. It has successfully met the challenge of radio and television. The instrument itself is not only improved, but electronics has revolutionized the techniques of recording so that there is no comparison between a record of 1925 vintage and those of 1953."

The march of progress did not cease. In 1949 RCA Victor introduced its 45 rpm system - the first record and changer made for each other, with distortion-free performance, on a lightweight, unbreakable disc, solving problems of home storage, shipping, etc. Today the concept of high fidelity has spurred RCA Victor to pioneer continuously - in stereophonic recording, in phonograph equipment and in the field of tape - bringing ever greater refinement to the field of home entertainment.

Over the years the achievements of RCA Victor in both the technical and artistic areas, as exemplified in these recordings, have amply fulfilled the old Victor motto: "The Music You Want When You Want It."

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SHEET MUSIC MINI-REVIEW

by Tex Wyndham

Just received copies of Society member David R. Lee's three latest compositions. After running through them a couple of times each, had the following reactions:

> Rag-A-Ma-Tango - Syncopated melody over tango rhythm. Not hard, but not very interesting, either. Too predictable.
>
> The Swinger - Extremely difficult, highly original rag with funky feel and ideas that are advanced but don't exceed the boundaries of ragtime. Would love to hear Dave, or someone, play this cleanly and up-to-tempo. Bet it would be a really fine number.
>
> Lullaby Rag - A dandy. Not too demanding, with long Lambesque lines and a languid, romantic atmosphere. Rich sound, full use of keyboard and four very well integrated strains. Rea lly marvelous.

Dave is certainly developing depth and distinctiveness as he goes along, and, in any event, the few ragtime composers around deserve encouragement. (Dave's covering letter mentions two more in process - "Euphoria", a rag waltz, and "Smooth Moves", a "swing rag".) His works are available separately at $1.00 each from Dun-Val Music Publishers, 4 Dundana Avenue, Dundas, Ontario, Canada L9H 4E6.

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CAPSULE

INFORMATION

RELEASES ---------- FOR HAPPY HUNTING

NOTE: We often receive information from members and other sources which can be passed along in brief form as items of possible general interest. CAPSULE INFORMATION RELEASES do not refer to items or material which can be obtained from the SOCIETY. Further, we do not guarantee the accuracy of the information given. Under the conditions stated, we are able to publicize a broader coverage of promising information coming to our attention.

Magazine - THE TALKING MACHINE REVIEW INTERNATIONAL Member ERNIE BAYLY of Bournemouth, England is responsible for this publication. It is published regularly and goes to 30 different countries with back issues in strong demand. Provides excellent reference for collectors, and those interested in the history and repair information on a wide range of phonographs. Write for subscription particulars to Ernie Bayly, c/o The Talking Machine Review International, 19 Glendale Road, Bournemouth, England, BH6 4JA.

L. P. Record - ORIGINAL RAGS - Jazz Studies No. 4 (Stereo). Rags composed and played by member DAVID R. LEE. This record contains eleven of Dave's ragtime compositions. Many members have heard Dave play at Bash times. Here he is on record for the first time. Can be ordered from Dun-Val Music Publishers, 4 Dundana Ave., Dundas, Ontario, Canada L9H 4E6. ($6.50 postpaid).

Book - THIS IS RAGTIME by Terry Waldo with foreword by Eubie Blake. Covers ragtime from its roots to the 1970s. Salty reading but thoroughly enjoyable in hands of Terry Waldo. 256 pages, 48 photos, 8 line drawings, U.S. price $10.95, Hawthorn Books, Inc., 260 Madison Avenue, New York City, N.Y. 10016, U.S.A.

Book - PIANO SERVICING, TUNING & REBUILDING by Arthur A. Reblitz - 174 pages on heavy slick paper for hundreds of detailed illustrations. A bible for the student and professional alike. Recommended by SOCIETY member Harvey Roehl. Available from The Vestal Press, P.O. Box 97, Vestal, N.Y. 13850, U.S.A. (U.S. price $15.00.)

Magazine - CODA, THE JAZZ MAGAZINE, published 6 times per year by JOHN NORRIS and BILL SMITH. This Canadian

Magazine (continued) — magazine is a world-wide favourite of Jazz Lovers. Covers mainstream as well as traditional music. Write for particulars to Coda Publications, P. O. Box 87, Station J, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4J 4X8.

Society — DETROIT HOT JAZZ SOCIETY

Many ragtimers in the Detroit area are members of this group. Sponsors live concerts given by the big name jazzmen from this continent and works through the efforts of Jim Taylor, Walt Gower and Mike Montgomery to preserve a sustaining vehicle for Traditional Jazz. Write for membership particulars to Jim Taylor, c/o Detroit Hot Jazz Society, 12311 Gratiot Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48205, U. S. A.

Books — POPULAR MUSIC PERIODICALS INDEX

1973	338 pages	$11. 50 (U. S.)
1974	413 pages	$15. 00 (U. S.)
1975	376 pages	$15. 00 (U. S.)

ANNUAL INDEX TO POPULAR MUSIC RECORD REVIEWS

1972	467 pages	$13. 50 (U. S.)
1973	681 pages	$20. 00 (U. S.)
1974	597 pages	$20. 00 (U. S.)
1975	552 pages	$20. 00 (U. S.)

Compiled by Canadians Andrew D. Armitage of Owen Sound and Dean Tudor of Toronto - a must for collectors and music libraries. Available from Scarecrow Press, Inc., P. O. Box 656, Metuchen, N. J. 08840, U. S. A.

L. P. Record — THE RED ONION JAZZ BAND with NATALIE LAMB: MANASSAS 1973. FAT CAT'S JAZZ, FCJ 157. Recorded live at 1973 Manassas Jazz Festival. Tex Wyndham wrote the liner notes and is at the piano on 8 of the 12 tracks. Available from Fat Cat's Jazz Records, P. O. Box 458, Manassas, Virginia 22110, U. S. A. (U. S. price $6. 98 postpaid).

L. P. Record — LOU HOOPER PIANO - 12 solo-piano performances recorded in Montreal in 1973 (CBC Canadian Collection 380) - available by mailing order to Radio Canada, International Transcription Service, P. O. Box 6000, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Price $4. 00 (in Canadian funds).

L. P. Record — SCOTT JOPLIN TREEMONISHA - by DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON - 2 record set of Original Cast Recording. Offered as Scott Joplin's only opera. Write to King Karol Records, Box 629, Times Square Station, New York, N. Y., U. S. A. for particulars.

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PERFORMERS: Please keep us posted on your whereabouts and your schedule will appear in this column.

SOMETHING DOING...

JOHN ARPIN - at the Chelsea Inn, 33 Gerrard St. W., Toronto - in "The Piano Bar" Mon. to Fri. 5:00 p. m. to 8:00 p. m. and with his trio in "The Chelsea Bun" Lounge Mon. to Sat. 9:00 p. m. to 1:00 a. m.

EUBIE BLAKE - The DEAN of RAGTIME - This popular recording artist and composer performs frequently at Concerts and Festivals. Does guest appearances on T. V. talk shows and is often to be heard on radio programs (watch your local press music programs for dates).

STEEN CHRISTENSEN - at the Mechanical Music Museum (MMM), Vesterbrogade 150, Copenhagen (Denmark), every 2nd & 4th Wednesday each month.

PETER FAHRENHOLTZ - plays solo ragtime piano and with bands - regularly on tour in Denmark.

DAVE FLOWITT - at Brunswick Hotel, Brunswick Street, Toronto with Dr. McJazz Band, Thursday through Saturday, 9:00 p. m. to 1:00 a. m.

"GASLIGHT" GALE FOEHNER - at the Red Creek, 800 Jefferson Rd., Rochester, N. Y. - with his "Scott Joplin and Others Still Live" Show every Saturday 4:30 p. m. to 7:30 p. m.

RALPH GRUGEL - and The Eagle Jazz Band at East Shore Club, Lakeshore Drive, Cleveland, Ohio, Fri. and Sat.

JOHN HASSE - at The Ordinary, Nashville, Indiana, Fri. and Sat. nights.

TOM JONES - Ragtime Pianist is doing regular playing dates in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area.

JIM KAPLAN - at the Pizza-Stein, 1428 W. Galena Ave., Freeport, Illinois on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

JOHN MADDOX - Regularly appearing in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, Washington and Virginia. (Watch your local news).

KEN MAYHERCY - (RAGTIME $ BILL) - appearing regularly at Colorado resort areas.

GLENN MEYER - and his band at St. Louis, Mo., making regular appearances.

BOB MILNE - at Charley's Crab Rest., Troy, Mich. I75 at Crook's Rd. Exit. (Alternates with Bob Seeley) 4:00 p. m. to 12:00 p. m. Mon. to Fri., 8 to 12 Sat., 5 to 9 Sun.

MIKE MONTGOMERY - at The Dakota Inn, Rathskeller, John R. Road north of McNichols, Detroit, Michigan, Friday nights.

MAX MORATH - on the road with his show "The Ragtime Years".

DR. ELI NEWBERGER - and The New Black Eagle Jazz Band at the Stickey Wicket Pub, West Main Street, Hopkinton , Mass., Thursday 8:00 p. m. to 12:00 p. m. (Pianist is Bob Pilsbury).

TOM NOEL - on the road with his living portrayal shows "Mark Twain at Home", and "Mr. Jelly Lord" based on the life of Jelly Roll Morton.

CHARLIE RASCH - with SISTER KATE, at the Cow Palace, Bancroft Road about 8 miles west of Toledo, Ohio, Fridays and Saturdays 9:00 p. m. on.

SI. RICHARDS - at Sheldon Inn, 6611 Eastland Rd., Middleburgh Heights, Ohio (5 min. south of Cleveland Hopkins Airport). Tues. thru Sat. 6:00 p. m. to 10:00 p. m.

HANK ROSS - with Red Onion Jazz Band, at O'Connor's Beef'n Ale House, 708 Mountain Blvd., Watchung, N. J. Friday nights at 7:30 p. m. on.

TOM SCHMUTZLER - with banjoist Harry Malfas, the Hardware City Temperance & Ragtime Society at the One Way Fare, Simsbury, Ct. Sun. nights. Also touring schools in southern New England with his own presentation "Our Ragtime Heritage".

BOB SEELEY - at Charley's Crab Rest., Troy, Mich. I75 at Crook's Rd. Exit. (Alternates with Bob Milne) 4:00 p. m. to 12:00 p. m. Mon. to Fri., 8 to 12 Sat., 5 to 9 Sun.

RICHARD SKRIKA - at the piano with the Eric Mannering New Imperial Jazz Band - Lee's Imperial Tavern, Riverside Drive, Windsor, Ontario, every Sat. 4:00 to 7:00 p. m.

DAN SUMMERS - and New Charleston Chasers regularly appearing in the Buffalo area.

TREBOR TICHENOR - on The Goldenrod Showboat, at St. Louis, Missouri. Does weekly radio show on KWMU - FM 90. 7 called "RAGOPHILE with Trebor Tichenor," Fridays at 6:00 p. m.

GERALD TRAUNIG - playing at Fiorello's Restaurant in West Hartford, Conn.

TERRY WALDO - has weekly half hour radio show "THIS IS RAGTIME" on National Public Radio - Check your local listing.

TEX WYNDHAM - and The Red Lion Jazz Band in the Green Room at the Hotel duPont, 11th & Market Sts., Wilmington, Del. 1st Fri. each month, 8. 30 p. m. to 12. 30 a. m., A/C 302-656-8121.

BILL ZINN - and Zinn's Ragtime String Quartet doing Concerts and College dates in the New York area.

SOCIETY OFFERING OF ITEMS FOR SALE TO MEMBERS

SOCIETY REPRINT SHEET MUSIC

(These are available at $1.00 each postpaid)
Please note: Minimum order $2.00

As a new discount opportunity for members, any group of 10 numbers of your own choice can be purchased for $5.00 postpaid. (A couple of alternative titles should be included with your order, because of dwindling supplies.)

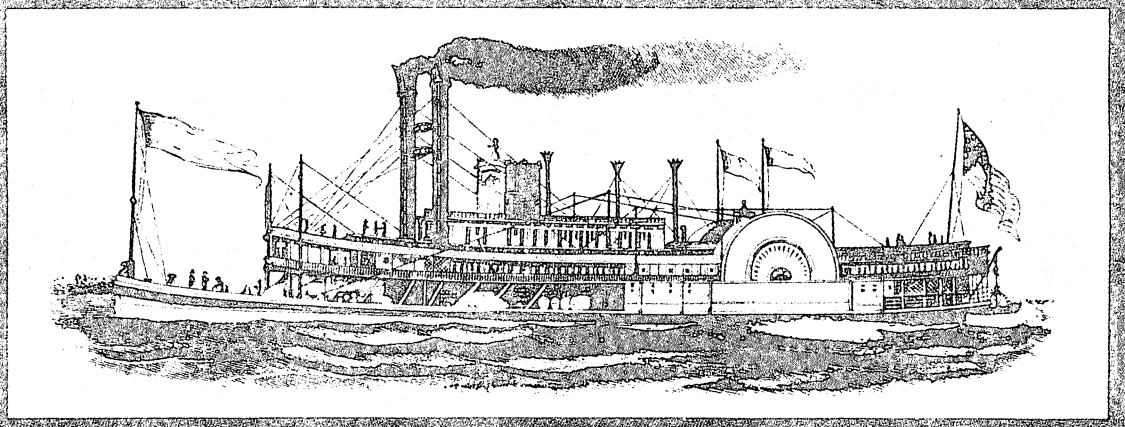
The reprints are limited to the music pages of each number, except where otherwise stated. All copies have been made on heavy white paper and sit up well on your piano music rack. These reprints were produced by THE SOCIETY some years ago, when the music selected was not known to be in print or otherwise available, for the personal study purposes of members only. They are not sold for commercial or professional purposes. Since the printings will not be repeated and were originally quite small, the continuing availability is entirely dependent on remaining supplies. Many of the reprinted numbers have already been sold out.

TITLE		ORDERING NUMBER
Making Cider (Lodge)		SR-085
Maple Leaf Rag (Joplin)	(Cover Reproduced)	SR-001
Ma Ragtime Queen (J. F. Barth)		SR-109
March Majestic (Joplin)		SR-071
Mardi Gras Rag (Lyon & Yosco)		SR-165
Maurice Rag, The (Wm. H. Penn)		SR-169
Meadowlark Rad (Pitts)		SR-056
Medic Rag (C. L. Woolsey)		SR-177
Minnesota Street Rag (Fred Swanson)		SR-124
Minstrel Man, The (J. Russell Robinson)		SR-061
Mississippi Rag (Krell)		SR-021
Monkey Rag (Wheatley Davis)		SR-113
Nonsense Rag (R. G. Grady)		SR-090
Novelty Rag (May Aufderheide)		SR-104
Oh! You Angel Rag (Ford T. Dabney)		SR-174
On Easy Street-In Rags (MacEachron)		SR-054
One More Rag (Minnie Berger)		SR-172
Original Rags (Joplin)	(Cover Reproduced)	SR-002
Palm Leaf Rag (Joplin)	(Cover Reproduced)	SR-005
Pekin Rag (Harry W. Martin)		SR-126
Phantom Rag, The (Violinsky & Brown)		SR-178
Pin Cushion Rag (R. G. Grady)		SR-176
Pinochle Rag (Seymour Furth)		SR-125
Pleasant Moments (Joplin)		SR-087
Pop Corn Man Rag, The (Jean Schwartz)		SR-140
Porto Rico (Ford T. Dabney)		SR-112

NOTICE OF DELETION & CORRECTION: Apple Jack (C. L. Johnson) SR-044 from JAN/FEB 1977 issue of THE RAGTIMER. Order as CM-645 from MAR/APR 1977 issue.

THE RAGTIME CURRENT

Piano Solos By A Mainstream Of Today's Ragtime Composers



William Albright / Donald Ashwander / William Bolcom / Milton Kaye / Max Morath
Trebor Jay Tichenor / Terry Waldo / Plus Sedalia (Mo.) Contest Winners

Selected (with descriptive notes) by RUDI BLESH

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